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Senate

The Senate met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. LEAHY).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal Lord God, every day Your hand of grace is upon us. Not a moment goes by that is not touched by Your providence. Give our Senators today tongues to speak Your truth and the hearts to do Your will. Lord, give them such a transcendent spirit that they will unleash redemptive forces to transform lives. Give them also the light of truth to show them where they ought to go. Make them faithful stewards of their time, talents, and testimony as they seek to live for Your glory.

We pray in Your holy Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable PATRICK J. LEAHY led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. REID. Following leader remarks, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 47, the Violence Against Women Act. Time until 11 a.m. will be equally divided and controlled between the two leaders or their designees.

At 11 a.m. there will be up to six rollcall votes in order to complete action on this legislation. Following disposition of VAWA, the Violence Against Women Act, we will recess until 2:15

p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings.

The State of the Union Address is this evening. Senators will gather at 8:20 p.m. tonight in this Chamber in order to proceed as a body to the House of Representatives, where the speech will be given.

There are up to six rollcall votes remaining: the Leahy amendment dealing with sex trafficking, the Portman amendment dealing with sex trafficking, the Murkowski amendment dealing with tribal protections, the Coburn amendment dealing with consolidation of DOJ rape programs, the Coburn amendment dealing with notice to victims and, most importantly, final passage of this legislation.

We are still working on some committee hearings that are creating some conflict, and we are going to see if we can work something out. At this stage we have not done that. Unless we ask the Senate to change the voting order, we will have those votes starting at 11 o'clock today.

STATE OF THE UNION

Four years ago, as newly elected President of the United States, Barack Obama prepared to deliver his first address to a joint session of Congress. The country at that time was in the midst of a grave crisis. Our economy had been shaken to its core by a financial crisis sparked by Wall Street greed. Millions of Americans had lost their jobs, their homes, and their hope.

President Obama predicted America would rise to meet the challenges of the day. He said:

We will rebuild, we will recover, and the United States of America will emerge stronger than before. The weight of this crisis will not determine the destiny of this Nation.

Four years later we can say with certainty he was right. Over the last 35 months, American businesses have created more than 6.1 million jobs—6.1 million jobs—including hundreds of thousands of jobs in manufacturing in

the auto industry. As a matter of fact, the figures are staggering. Five hundred thousand manufacturing jobs have been added, and 1 million jobs have been saved due to the President's auto rescue program. That is a fairly significant change.

We still have a long way to go to get back to full strength, and there are still too many Americans out of work. We made solid progress in the last 4 years, but we have a long way to go. The depth of the crisis did not determine our destiny. Instead, determination drove us to prosper again. We are faced with an opportunity disguised as a challenge. We must build on this progress, fostering a lasting recovery that ensures Americans' success is determined by the strength of their will, not the size of their wallet.

Tonight, President Obama will chart a course to maintain the economic progress we made and revitalize the still struggling middle class. I look forward to hearing his vision. I expect the President will call for commonsense investments in our future. Investments have been deferred for far too long because of economic turmoil. When times are hard, these investments are easy to put off. If America hopes to compete in a changing world, we must prepare today's students for tomorrow's jobs. We must give small businesses and American manufacturers the support they need to thrive. We must stop relying on foreign oil and start investing in renewable energy. It is better for our environment and for our economy.

If we hope to rebuild and maintain a world-class economy, we must build a 21st century infrastructure to support that economy. Renewing these investments is not only the right thing to do for our country, it is the right thing to do for our economy.

In the last 4 years the President has repeatedly reached across the aisle to Republicans, suggesting we find common ground for the sake of recovery. Tonight will be no different. He will

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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